1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

dormitories (*mbure*) and take no notice of their parent's admonitions; they go as they like. On the other hand, it was formerly considered a good thing to have bastards; if the father were a noble, so were his children.

Bastards are called "children of the path" (*luve ni wakolo*); they are looked down upon, whereas children of the house are respected. A Levuka man holds that bastards are bad characters; they don't obey; they are a bad breed (*kawa*).

An unmarried man is called *thauravou*, youth; a married man is described as *matua*, or old man. An unmarried girl is a "young woman" (*ngone alewa*). Maidens often wear tresses on one side of the head: the hair behind the ear is allowed to grow and is plaited into small cords. It is forbidden to cut off a maiden's tresses unless she appears pregnant. No one formerly would do so unless he knew something against her; now they do so in play. About twenty years ago every girl had tresses; if she had none she was not a virgin; now many are without it; tresses now appear unsightly. They used to be considered an ornament.

MARRIAGE

Cross-cousin marriage brings clans into the relation of cross cousins. Thus there is much intermarriage between Naivi and Vatuwangga. A man of Vatuwangga will be told, "Your sisters are in Vatuwangga, your wives in Naivi." Sometimes of old a man would take over some of his deceased father's wives. Thus Vuetasau took over one of Malani's wives.

Marriages are arranged by the family "turning the points (or bows) towards one another (*vakanamuani*)." Love matches and runaway matches, however, occur. Formerly women were precious, and marriages had to be discussed and arranged.

A marriage ceremony (*vakawati*) is now frequently described as *vakamau*, from the Tongan *fakamau*, to judge, inquire, on account of the questions put at the marriage ceremony according to European custom. I have not attended a wedding, so I must describe it from hearsay:

If a man and a woman like each other the man tells his clan and family (*yavusa*). It is their part "to go to fetch her," as the expression is, *lakovakina* [if *lakovaki* is used it is plain it concerns marriage]. They go to the woman; the man's father bears kava which is called "the thing to fetch her with" (*a ona i lakovi*). The woman comes out or stops inside and they inquire her mind. If she is willing they go away. Sometimes they appoint the date of the wedding if the other side also desires the match; otherwise her relatives do not assent; nothing is decided; the visitors go home, and the woman's people discuss whether or not the marriage will take place. If all agree to the marriage, the date is fixed. The man's people prepare a feast with intensity (*vakambimbi*); if the woman's side should be more energetic than the man's it looks bad. On the wedding day the woman's people make a feast on either a big or a small scale. While the feast is being prepared the couple dress (*teuteu*). A Lauan wedding is a cause of bashfulness because a man is so wrapped in clothes he cannot be seen. The women also put on plenty of painted bark cloth. The man goes to take off his clothes (*uluulu*) at the woman's house; the woman goes to take hers off at the man's house. Then they go to church. After that they again dress. A painted bark cloth (*ngatu*) is spread from the woman's house to the man's to be their path. They go backwards and forwards two or three times, taking off their clothes each time and bearing painted bark cloth and whale's teeth; they take off their clothes five or six times. Then the man and the woman each retires to his house to wait for the evening

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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881 The patients were confined for about a week in either the tattoo house or their parents' homes under the care of the tattoo specialist. Food was provided for them by their parents. 304 They were not allowed to bathe in the sea, to leave their houses except in case of necessity, or to be seen by men.

When the design (*nggia* or *sothondra*) which covered the girl's thighs was completed, it resembled a pair of black shorts. It was hidden by the girl's skirt of hibiscus bark (*liku*). After the thighs had been tattooed a design (*samunggawe*) was tattooed on the back of the fingers between the knuckle and the first joint. Then a design (*tawelu*) consisting of a half-moon filled in solidly with black was tattooed on each corner of the mouth. The designs on the fingers and the mouth showed that the girl was nubile.

[424 Each specialist had her own designs, which resembled designs seen today on bark-
531] cloth. The designs for a chief's daughter and those for other girls differed, but no one knew what the difference was.

When the entire process was finished a feast (*kanakana vatu ni nggia*) was held. The girls bathed in the sea for the first time after the final operation and their bodies were oiled and clothed in barkcloth. They were usually married soon after this ceremony.

[177] Informants believed that tattooing was introduced into Lau by immigrants who came from Viti Levu and founded the chiefs' phratry in Lau. This would identify the tattooing complex with the high Fijian culture of eastern Fiji (p. 215). According to Roth (20), tattooing is still practiced surreptitiously in the provinces of Ra on Viti Levu and Mathuata on Vanua Levu. Its survival in these provinces, which are strongholds of the high Fijian culture, substantiates the above hypothesis. (See also Brewster, 1, pp. 185-186.)

Today, some boys and girls have their names tattooed on their arms by anyone who has learned to write. This is done with a needle and any dye. Names are often misspelled and letters inverted.

BETROTHAL

●584 Child betrothal (*watchi ni suthu*) is common in Lau. The boy's father arranges his betrothal to his female cross cousin, the preferred mate, some time before he reaches the age of seven or eight. Having chosen a mate for his son, the father discusses the matter with the elders of his clan. If the match is approved, he collects a whale's tooth, mats, tapa, and other property from his relatives. Several male members of the clan present the formal proposal (*lakovakina*) accompanied by the property (*i lakovaki ni tchikina*). After considering the matter the girl's clan sends a representative with the
[177] answer to the boy's clan. In recent times the proposal and the answer are occasionally written in pencil on imported paper. If the proposal is refused the property is returned. If it is accepted the two children are called *watchi* (spouse) and gifts of food and property are made at intervals by the boy's father to the girl's father. When the children reach the age of seven or eight they are informed of the arrangement.

[583] Child betrothal is not binding, but natives say that most child betrothals are consummated in marriage. If either the boy or the girl does not care to

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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marry his betrothed he may break the engagement (*vakandaroivola*). This necessitates the formal return of the property (*i lakovaki ni tchikina*) presented by the boy's clan to the girl's clan at the betrothal ceremony, or its equivalent. However, the food and property, of considerable value, which the girl's relatives have received from the boy's relatives from time to time are not returned with the original gift. 584

Frequently a man is reluctant to marry his childhood betrothed for, just as the tabu on a man's classificatory sisters (*weka*) tends to stimulate his sexual interest in them, so the accessibility of his cross cousins (*watchi*), especially his betrothed, tends to make them less desirable. However, he is loathe to break his engagement, for he knows that if he does so his father will be very angry at the loss of so much property. Hence a young man postpones his marriage as long as possible.

When he is between eighteen and twenty-five, his father and his clan, whose interests lie in the preservation of the sacred clan mana, force him to take decisive steps toward marriage. He either marries his childhood betrothed or breaks his engagement and finally becomes engaged to another girl. After he has talked to the girl (*veivosaki*) and gained her consent, he tells his father. If the elders of his clan approve of the match, the formal proposal (*lakovakina*) is made. When the elders of the girl's clan have approved the match, an engagement feast (*mangitchi ni vola*) is prepared and presented by the boy's relatives to those of the girl. When a match is not sanctioned by the clan elders, the young couple occasionally elope (*veitumbaitaki*) to the bush, where they stay until the anger of their relatives, especially of the boy's father, has abated. At first the couple is talked about in the village, but gossip soon dies away. When they return they are accepted as man and wife and a wedding feast may or may not be held. [582] [583]

MARRIAGE

Weddings in Lau differ greatly in size and importance. The quality and quantity of the feasts and gifts for the ceremonial affinal exchanges not only reflect but also determine the social status of the intermarrying clans, and there is much rivalry between them. However, in the long run, the boy's clan usually contributes the larger quantity of food and property (p. 95). The boy's clan sets the date for the ceremonies which are usually held in harvest season when food is abundant. 585

Preparations for the wedding rites are begun months ahead. The work is shared by the men of each of the intermarrying clans who are responsible for the marriage feasts and by the women, who provide the tapa and mats for the affinal exchanges of property.

I attended a wedding in Naivindamu, a small low ranking village of sailors

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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836 839 house, because he hoped that people would believe he had come to find the boy. He ran out of the house and escaped, but not before he had been recognized. The next day the story had spread all over the island and Sekala was the butt of much ridicule.

832 If a girl wants a man, according to one informant, she talks nicely to him, says a tabu word in fun, and asks him for tobacco. Then she can see whether or not he likes her. If the man does not care for the girl and she desires him, she tries to arouse him by making lascivious movements or by approaching him when he is asleep.

836 833 Lovers usually have intercourse at night under the palm trees fringing the beach or in an empty house in the village. If a house is already occupied they try to find another place, perhaps the shadow of a canoe. Occasionally they meet during the day in the bush. Married people have connection in the sleeping house or in the bush.

539 GETTING MARRIED IN LAU

Mbasu na waka me tou nggunuva,
Liri na kena wai mbulambula,
Wai sevu ma kere savuya,
Kena kambisa koto ma na utha.

Break the kava root and let us drink here,
The water poured in is quite clear,
I can hear the sound of it again
Like the falling of the gentle rain.

Kava chant from Namuka.

584 FREQUENTLY a boy is betrothed at an early age to his cross cousin, the preferred mate in Lau. Child betrothal is not so common in Lau today as it was formerly, for there is a growing tendency for young people to choose their mates themselves. Child betrothal is arranged by the boy's father any time before the child reaches the age of seven or eight, when he is informed of the arrangement.

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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The betrothal proceeds as follows. Having picked a suitable mate for his son, the father discusses the matter with his clan. If the match is approved he collects whales' teeth, mats, bark-cloth, and other property from his relatives. Several men of the clan present a formal proposal, accompanied by the property, to the girl's relatives. The proposal is considered by the girl's clan, which sends a formal answer on the following day. Both the proposal and the answer are frequently in written form today, since many Lauans can read and write the Mbauan dialect. A piece of paper and pencil are used. If the proposal is refused the property is returned. If it is accepted the two children are called by a term which means spouse (*watchi*). Further gifts of property and food are made at intervals to the girl's father by the boy's father.

The natives say that most child betrothals are consummated in marriage. However, if the young people do not care to marry, either one may break the engagement. In such a case the original gift of whales' teeth and property presented by the boy's clan to the girl's clan, or its equivalent, is returned. However, the food and property, amounting to considerable value, which her relatives from time to time have received from him, are not returned with the original gift.

Frequently the boy would like to free himself of the obligation to marry his betrothed. Just as the tabu on a man's sisters and female parallel cousins stimulates his sexual interest in them, so the accessibility of his cross cousins, especially his betrothed, renders them less desirable. However, he is loath to break his engagement, for if he does so his father and his father's brothers will be very angry because they will lose so much property.

On account of the surplus of women in southern Lau a man can easily secure a wife. If he does not marry his cross cousin he chooses a mate from the many eligible girls on his island or on another. However, a young man is usually reluctant to marry and settle down. After his initiation, life

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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883 becomes rather pleasant. He is accepted as a man in the
581 community, but he avoids the full responsibility of an adult. Although he sleeps in a men's house he is still a member of his father's household, cultivates his father's lands, and contributes to the daily supply and preparation of food for his father's earth oven. He participates in the ceremonies and games of his age group, spears fish, and sails on trading expeditions. He is sought after by the young women of the community among whom, with the exception of the group tabu to him, he is free to make conquests. The more numerous his affairs the greater he is desired by women. If he should have a
[848] bastard or two, the girl's father will care for the child. When he marries, however, he must accept the responsibilities of an adult; found his own household, work his own garden, and support his family.

A girl, on the other hand, is eager to marry. She is interested in securing a good husband—one who is a dependable provider and a strong man, physically and mentally—for her well-being and her position in the community will depend on her husband. Moreover, she anticipates a more satisfactory sex life after marriage. Once betrothed, a girl rarely breaks an engagement, but waits until the young man is ready to marry.

584 By the time a young man is about 25 years old his father
583 and his clan, whose interests still lie in the preservation of the sacred clan "mana", exert pressure, forcing him to take decisive steps toward marriage. He either marries his childhood betrothed, who is between 18 and 25 years old, or he breaks with her and becomes engaged to another girl. After he has secured her consent he informs his father, and the matter is discussed by the elders of his clan. If they approve of the match a formal proposal is made. If the betrothal is sanctioned by the girl's clan an engagement feast is prepared and presented by the young man's clan to the girl's clan. On the other hand, if the match is not sanctioned, the couple

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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occasionally run away and live together in the bush. At the end of our stay in Tokalau, canoes arrived from Mothe to take a young woman of the village to Mothe to be married. In the morning the girl was nowhere to be found, and it was discovered that she had run away to the bush with a young man. The Mothe canoes had to return without the bride. The pair usually stay away until the anger of their relatives and especially of the young man's father has somewhat abated. At first they are berated in the village, but gossip soon dies away. When the pair return to the village they are accepted as man and wife. A wedding feast may or may not be held.

Marriages differ in size and importance according to the status of the inter-marrying clans. The marriage feasts and ceremonial gifts not only reflect but also determine the social status of the participating clans, who try to outdo each other in the quantity and splendor of their gifts. It is, however the young man's clan which in the long run contributes the larger quantity of food and property. The man's clan sets the date for the ceremonies, which are usually held in harvest season when food is readily available.

The marriage of a couple belonging to low ranking clans is a small affair, but that of a couple belonging to clans of high social standing involves the exchange of large amounts of property and the consumption of quantities of food. Preparations for the wedding feasts and ceremonies are begun months ahead by both the youth's and the girl's relatives. The work is shared by the men, who are responsible for the garden produce contributed by both sides for the marriage feasts, and by the women, who provide the barkcloth and mats for the affinal exchanges. An important wedding is discussed far and wide, and is attended by relatives from many villages and islands. The marriage of a high chief at Lakemba is a historic event, and a drain on the economic resources of the whole group. It is attended by representatives